



ST. LUKE LUTHERAN CHURCH
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St. Luke Online: www.stlukeweb.com

JANUARY
2025 NEWSLETTER

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

January 2025

“Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.” - I Thessalonians 5:16-18

Even though my brain knows dates are arbitrary, the start of the new year always fills me with anticipation. As I write this, my fifty-fifth New Year's Day is weeks away, but I find myself reflecting on the other fifty-four. Many of those January Firsts ushered in years that would contain life-changing events for me.

In 1999, for example, I made the decision to get out of teaching and pursue ordained ministry. I was enrolled in seminary by September. But on January 1, I was still in year one of what I thought at the time would be a long teaching. That year changed my life, but on January 1, I had no idea what was coming.

In 2009, I celebrated New Year's Day with my Aunt Gail, Uncle Fred, and Cousin Fred, Jr. I don't remember much about that night. But four months later, all three would die in the same automobile accident. For that reason, 2009 also had a profound (and much more devastating) impact on my life.

As we celebrate the arrival of 2025, we could all probably come up with our own lists January firsts that, unbeknownst to us, ushered in exciting, tragic, or otherwise monumental years. Some of them we even have in common. Do you remember how blissfully unaware we all were on January 1, 2020?

Will 2025 just be another year, or will it be monumental? Will it bring change and newness, or catastrophe? None of us can know for sure.

But one thing we do know with absolute certainty: our God will still be our God. Jesus will continue to be Emmanuel, God with us. God will be with us whether we celebrate victories and new possibilities or experience profound loss.

My prayer is that we will all experience the former. But in any case, as I wish you a Happy New Year, the one thing we can expect for sure is to experience the JOY of Jesus Christ.



FROM THE OFFICE Pastor Jeff will be out of the office on vacation until Jan. 1st. The Rev. Carol Johnson will be available for emergency care, please call her at 570-772-6674.

INCLEMENT WEATHER CLOSING ANNOUNCEMENT may be found by checking the church website (stlukeweb.com), and our FACEBOOK page.

Serving in January at the 10:30 am worship service

Altar Care: Jannine Monness

Greeters: 5th Carole Harris & Melanie Taormina; 12th Janice & Richard Ogurcak; 19th Ruth Croyle; 26th Cindy & Terry Belles

Ushers: 5th Chip Edmonds; 12th Jere Eshleman; 19th Nancy Wood; 26th Jere Eshleman

Acolyte: 5th Daniel Taormina; 12th Jacob Edmonds; 19th Lily Judge; 26th Luke Edmonds

Live Stream Assistant: 5th & 19th Brad Nason; 12th & 26th Charles Mahler

Jan 5th Second Sunday of Christmas

9:30 am Lector - Cheryl Newburg

Assisting Minister - Allan Husband

Communion Assistant - Becky Lewis

Jan. 12th Baptism of Our Lord

10:30 am Lector - Sandy Lentz- Strother

Assisting Minister - Marilyn Eshleman

Communion Assistant - Rod Strother

Jan. 19th Second Sunday after Epiphany

10:30 am Lector - Raymond Schreckengas

Assisting Minister - Melanie Taormina

Communion Assistant - Nancy Wood

Jan 26th Third Sunday after Epiphany

10:30 am Lector - Jay Nau

Assisting Minister - Deb Smith

Communion Assistant - Hanne Schuman

Offering Counters in January

5th Sue Beidler & Marilyn Eshleman

12th Sondra Fisher & Nancy McCarty

19th Ray Schreckengast & Marilyn Eshleman

26th Terry Belles & Pat Kelley (*training)



The Adult Sunday School class at St. Luke Lutheran Church meets in the church library at 9:15 AM on Sunday mornings. We will look at the lessons from the ELCA, based on the Year B lectionary. I hope to see you there!

If you want to look at our course materials, all of the Lessons are available here (we are in Lectionary Year B, Sundays after Epiphany):

<https://elca.org/Resources/Bible-Studies>

If you would like to receive weekly lesson emails, please let me know and I will add you to the list. Please contact the church office or Charles Mahler at

Mahler@lycoming.edu .



CHILDREN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL for elementary school-aged kids is held during the 10:30 AM worship service. Each Sunday, Cheryl Newburg will lead the kids out of the service at the beginning of the readings and bring them back at the beginning of the choir anthem.

The kids will watch videos, read the Bible, and do some simple story-related activities that follow the lectionary; learning the same stories that are being covered in the service. **We are looking for leaders and volunteers to alternate weeks with Cheryl.** If you would like to volunteer, please contact the church office.

(clearances are needed for this program)

SERVING

(Lectors, Assistant Minister, or Communion Helper) If you would like to help serve in our 8:00AM or 10:30AM worship service(s), please contact Diane Kohler at 570-419-7085 or email kohlerdede@gmail.com or Pastor Jeff at 570-323-7309.

USHERS

Anyone interested in serving as an usher, please contact the office or email or call Nancy McCarty at: nmac7149@gmail.com; (570) 419-7827).

GREETERS

Anyone interested in serving as a greeter, please contact the church office or Debra Smith at 570-762-3308 or email at: mdtmom4@gmail.com

Livestream operators needed!

The livestream of our 10:30 Sunday service has been a great resource for many of our homebound members, friends of the congregation living far away from Williamsport, and as a low-stakes way of visitors to check out worship at St. Luke. We are currently in need of a few more people to facilitate the broadcast. It is a relatively simple operation; if you know how to point and click on a computer, you can learn how to run the livestream! Training will be provided. Please contact Pastor Jeff if interested.

THANK YOU



The Nave Christmas Tree is given in loving memory of our wonderful husband and father Tom by Ruth, Matt, and Megan Croyle.

The Christmas trees above the narthex were given by Charles and Melissa Mahler in memory of their parents: June and Daniel Wolfe, and Clara and Herbert Mahler.

SEW FINE QUILTERS

Please join us on **Monday, January 6th from 9:00AM to 3:00PM in Bell Hall.** Come and go as your time permits. If possible join us for lunch at noon, lunch will be provided. No quilting experience is needed, join the FUN!

PVC meets next on Tuesday, January 7th at 2:00pm in the Library.

SHAWL MINISTRY

When members or friends of the congregation experience trying times or milestones of great joy, we present them with a prayer shawl as a visible sign of our prayers for them. Shawls can be knitted at monthly meetings held on the 3rd Tuesday of the month (Sept.- May) or any time at home. We meet next on **Tuesday, Jan. 21st from 9:30 am -12 noon** in the Lounge. All are welcome!



The St. Luke Youth Group and Friends



On Dec. 9, 2024, the St. Luke Sr. High Youth and Friends gave back to the community; helping the Salvation Army in Williamsport pack 641 food boxes for needy families during the Christmas season.

SEAFARERS

It is time to think about the 2025 Seafarers Christmas collection. We ask for your response in January, in hopes you will take advantage of the after-Christmas sales to purchase sweatshirts, t-shirts, and socks. There will be a table or box in the West Hall to place your donations. Items needed: **sweatshirts with or without a hood in sizes M-L-XL, T-shirts in sizes M-L-XL and three pairs of heavy socks (no ankle socks)**. Thanks for your support and have a blessed 2024!

FROM THE FELLOWSHIP MINISTRY

Please consider volunteering for Coffee Hour! All coffee, tea, paper products, etc. are in the kitchen. Volunteers are asked to provide snacks, such as muffins, donuts, cookies, etc. Please contact a member of the Fellowship Ministry if you would like us to help you set up for Coffee Hour or if you have any questions. Ruth Croyle at 570-433-3873 or Jeanne Yaggi at 570-329-6980. (*Volunteers needed for Jan. 19th & Feb. 2nd*)



Bulletin Announcement Deadline - Wednesday at 9:00 am

All article information and materials for the bulletin or newsletter must be submitted using WORD or PDF format. Please email to info@stlukeweb.com.

Newsletter Deadline - The 15th of each month at 9:00 am

Ministry Meeting Minutes for Church Council - Thursday at 9:00 am before Mtg. Council meetings are held on the second Monday of each month.

*If you would like to receive the newsletter (in color!) via email, please contact the church office at 570-323-7309 or by email at info@stlukeweb.com. Thank you.

ONGOING COLLECTIONS AT ST. LUKE



DANIEL'S CLOSET needs **winter seasonal clothing** (*NO hangers*) for infants, children, and adults, as well as accessories (belts, ties, shoes, purses, backpacks/bags, suitcases, etc.). All clothing must be bagged, no loose clothing, please. A collection box is located in our West Hall

SHEPHERD OF THE STREETS Items needed are of regular sizes:
Updated 12/12 – Kid's Body Wash, Toothbrush/Toothpaste, Deodorant, Diapers, Wipes, Shampoo, Powder, Oil, Q-tips, Soap, Shaving Cream and Razors, Tissues, Shampoo and Conditioner, Toilet Paper, Women's Hygiene Products, etc. *These hygiene items are collected in the West entryway.*

THE FOOD PANTRY Below is a list of items the UCLC Food Pantry is in need of. *Updated 12/12 - These items are collected in our West entryway.* After office hours' drop-offs: Office foyer entrance.

Pancake Mix & Syrup
Jelly, Ketchup, Mayo
Apple Juice, coffee, tea
Tuna Fish, Spam

Ramen- Beef/Shrimp
Canned soups & Fruit
Baked Beans
Salt & Pepper



For The Pre-School at St. Luke Pancake Breakfast

Saturday, February 8, 2025
More information coming soon!



UPDATE: In total, **1,013 Seafarers Bags** were loaded up into two vans to be taken to Seafarers International House in New York City in early November. They were collected by 52 of our synod congregations. Pastor Marsh Drege, executive director, said they will deliver them to seafarers who will not be home with their loved

ones for Christmas. Eight synod volunteers helped to pack the bags, collected by synod congregations, into the vans at the synod office. This year marked the fourteenth year of collection, totaling 8909 bags. More about Christmas- at-Sea:

<https://www.sihnyc.org/christmas-at-sea>



Sojourner Truth Ministries, Inc.

Sojourner Truth Ministries is currently in need of new or gently used warm sleeping bags. They have several patrons who are homeless and are in need. For more information, please call 570-324-1797 or email sojournertruthministries@gmail.com



From Bishop Miller: Dec 2024- Germany Trip December 16, 2024

In November, Bishop Miller and Lowell Leitzel represented the Upper Susquehanna Synod at the ELCA

Wittenberg Center 25th Anniversary Seminar in Wittenberg, Germany. Prior to the seminar, Bishop Miller visited the Kirchenkreis Ansbach-Würzburg, a companion church to the synod. Bishop Miller reflects on his visit.

It gave me great pleasure to visit with our companion church in Ansbach and to attend the Wittenberg Center 25th Anniversary seminar. My visit gave me the opportunity to gain an understanding of the Lutheran Church in Germany and begin to know our partners in that part of the world. While in Ansbach, I was able to see some of the global mission work of the Bavarian church, including our shared accompaniment with the Lutheran Church in Liberia.

Near the end of the Wittenberg seminar, I was asked to name my favorite part of the week's events. Although I could not answer at the time, the question made me think hard about what I was doing there and what I would take from this visit.

Near the end of the week, as we gathered for daily worship in the Stadtkirche (town church), I looked around at those in attendance – nearly forty from the seminar along with a small number of local congregation members, including (and especially) sisters from the local deaconess community. It was not the pulpit from which Martin Luther preached, nor the font in which his children were baptized, and not even the altar painting by Lucas Cranach depicting Lutheran theology in art that caught my spirit: Rather, I found myself awed to know that a community gathers in this place nearly every day to pray for and on behalf of the world.

This experience reminded me that God's mission for the church includes prayer for those who are not among us, even those who are not a part of the body of Christ. In the Stadtkirche, I saw a small community with a big task but one borne alongside the one who bore all the world on the cross. I was filled with hope for our small congregations who share that same commission of prayer. To all our congregations I say: "Let us pray..."

DREAMWEEK

JANUARY 17 - JANUARY 25

MISSION POSSIBLE:

Protecting Freedom, Justice, and Democracy



Service Opportunities!

January 17

Meal Prep for Meal & Message

New Covenant United Church of Christ
202 E. 3rd St., Williamsport
5:30 pm - 7:30 pm

January 18

Meal & Message

Sojourner Truth Ministries
501 High St., Williamsport
10:00 am - 1:00 pm

January 22

Food Box Packing

Central PA Food Bank
3301 Wahoo Dr., Williamsport
9:00 am - 11:00 am

January 22

Kitchen Takeover

Sojourner Truth Ministries
501 High St., Williamsport
9:00 am - 11:00 am (prep & cook meal)
11:00 am - 1:00 pm (serve meal)

January 23

Food Box Packing

Central PA Food Bank
3301 Wahoo Dr., Williamsport
1:00 pm - 3:00 pm

January 24

ARW Clothing Drive

American Rescue Workers
337 Bridge St., Williamsport
8:00 am - 12:00 pm

January 24

Central PA Food Bank Fresh Express Distribution

Firetree Place
600 Campbell St., Williamsport
10:30 am - 2:15 pm

January 24

ARW Congregate Lunch

American Rescue Workers
337 Bridge St., Williamsport
12:00 pm - 1:00 pm

Dream Week Events!

January 20

MLK Day Children's Event

James V. Brown Library
19 E. 4th St., Williamsport
10:00 am - 11:15 am

January 20

Peace Walk & Hygiene Drive

Please bring a hygiene product to be donated to local agencies
Begins at Bethel AME Church
601 Hepburn St., Williamsport
12:00 pm - 12:45 pm

January 24

PCT Financial Literacy Lunch & Learn

STEP, Inc. | Conference Rm. 1
2138 Boyd St., Williamsport
12:00 pm - 1:00 pm

January 25

Bus Trip - The African American Museum of History & Culture in Washington D.C.

25 tickets are being sold at
United Churches of Lycoming
County for \$64 each
570-322-1110
202 E. 3rd St., Williamsport
6:00 am - 9:00 pm

REGISTER
TODAY!

www.stepcorp.org/MLK

Coordinated by:



Bus Trip

JOIN US FOR A TRIP TO WASHINGTON DC
AFRICAN AMERICAN MUSEUM OF HISTORY & CULTURE
JANUARY 25, 2025

only
\$64



25
Tickets
available

A PART OF MLK DREAM WEEK CELEBRATION: TICKETS SOLD AT
UNITED CHURCHES OF LYCOMING COUNTY
202 EAST THIRD STREET WILLIAMSPORT | 570-322-1110



To our members celebrating a birthday in January....

Janice Ogurcak	January 01
Linda Wolfe	January 01
Addison Confer	January 02
Trent Jean	January 02
Karen Scampone	January 04
Judith Keller	January 05
Sondra Fisher	January 06
Karen Baldys	January 08
Jeanne Yaggi	January 11
Dwight Rhodes	January 13
Lore Tignor	January 16
William Merkel	January 19
Sarah Young	January 20
Ruth Croyle	January 23
Linda Liptak	January 23
Constance Karnes	January 24
Karen Morrison	January 24
Cherie Musser	January 25
Andrew Harris	January 26
Wilma Reeder	January 26
Juliet Harris	January 27
John Kelsey	January 31

Happy Wedding Anniversary.....

David and Lynn Shade January 22
Hank and Joan Knaus January 29

(We're sorry if we missed anyone. If we did, please contact the office so we can add you to our records.)

STAFF AT ST. LUKE



Pastor Jeffrey LeCrone, Pastor
Email: info@stlukeweb.com



Sarah M. Young, Church Office Manager
Email: info@stlukeweb.com



Rebecca Ciabattari, Organist/Choir Director
Email: beckyciab@gmail.com



Chris Knaur, Sexton
Email: info@stlukeweb.com



Melissa Eshleman, Business Manager
Email: businessmanager.stlukeluth@gmail.com

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